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38 CFR Ch. I (7-1-04 Edition)

(b) *Annulled.* A copy or abstract of the decree of annulment. A decree regular on its face will be accepted unless there is reason to question the basic authority of the court to render annulment decrees or there is evidence indicating that the annulment may have been obtained through fraud by either party or by collusion.

CROSS REFERENCES: Effective dates, void or annulled marriage. See § 3.400 (u) and (v). Evidence of dependents and age. See § 3.204.

[28 FR 2904, Mar. 3, 1963, as amended at 40 FR 53581, Nov. 19, 1975; 52 FR 19349, May 22, 1987; 59 FR 46338, Sept. 8, 1994]

§ 3.208 Claims based on attained age.

In claims for pension where the age of the veteran or surviving spouse is material, the statements of age will be accepted where they are in agreement with other statements in the record as to age. However, where there is a variance in such records, the youngest age will be accepted subject to the submission of evidence as outlined in § 3.209.

CROSS REFERENCE: Evidence of dependents and age. See § 3.204.

[40 FR 53581, Nov. 19, 1975, as amended at 52 FR 19349, May 22, 1987]

§ 3.209 Birth.

Age or relationship is established by one of the following types of evidence. If the evidence submitted for proof of age or relationship indicates a difference in the name of the person as shown by other records, the discrepancy is to be reconciled by an affidavit or certified statement identifying the person having the changed name as the person whose name appears in the evidence of age or relationship.

(a) A copy or abstract of the public record of birth. Such a record established more than 4 years after the birth will be accepted as proof of age or relationship if, it is not inconsistent with material of record with the Department of Veterans Affairs, or if it shows on its face that it is based upon evidence which would be acceptable under this section.

(b) A copy of the church record of baptism. Such a record of baptism performed more than 4 years after birth will not be accepted as proof of age or relationship unless it is consistent

with material of record with the Department of Veterans Affairs, which will include at least one reference to age or relationship made at a time when such reference was not essential to establishing entitlement to the benefit claimed.

(c) Official report from the service department as to birth which occurred while the veteran was in service.

(d) Affidavit or a certified statement of the physician or midwife in attendance at birth.

(e) Copy of Bible or other family record certified to by a notary public or other officer with authority to administer oaths, who should state in what year the Bible or other book in which the record appears was printed, whether the record bears any erasures or other marks of alteration, and whether from the appearance of the writing he or she believes the entries to have been made at the time purported.

(f) Affidavits or certified statements of two or more persons, preferably disinterested, who will state their ages, showing the name, date, and place of birth of the person whose age or relationship is being established, and that to their own knowledge such person is the child of such parents (naming the parents) and stating the source of their knowledge.

(g) Other evidence which is adequate to establish the facts in issue, including census records, original baptismal records, hospital records, insurance policies, school, employment, immigration, or naturalization records.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501)

CROSS REFERENCE: Evidence of dependents and age. See § 3.204.

[26 FR 1573, Feb. 24, 1961, as amended at 27 FR 1899, Feb. 28, 1962; 40 FR 53581, Nov. 19, 1975; 47 FR 28096, June 29, 1982; 52 FR 19349, May 22, 1987; 59 FR 46338, Sept. 8, 1994]

§ 3.210 Child's relationship.

(a) *Legitimate child.* Where it is necessary to determine the legitimacy of a child, evidence will be required to establish the legality of the marriage of the mother of the child to the veteran or to show that the child is otherwise legitimate by State laws together with evidence of birth as outlined in § 3.209.

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Where the legitimacy of a child is not a factor, evidence to establish legitimacy will not be required: *Provided*, That, evidence is on file which meets the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section sufficient to warrant recognition of the relationship of the child without regard to legitimacy.

(b) *Illegitimate child*. As to the mother of an illegitimate child, proof of birth is all that is required. As to the father, the sufficiency of evidence will be determined in accordance with the facts in the individual case. Proof of such relationship will consist of:

(1) An acknowledgment in writing signed by him; or

(2) Evidence that he has been identified as the child's father by a judicial decree ordering him to contribute to the child's support or for other purposes; or

(3) Any other secondary evidence which reasonably supports a finding of relationship, as determined by an official authorized to approve such findings, such as:

(i) A copy of the public record of birth or church record of baptism, showing that the veteran was the informant and was named as parent of the child; or

(ii) Statements of persons who know that the veteran accepted the child as his; or

(iii) Information obtained from service department or public records, such as school or welfare agencies, which shows that with his knowledge the veteran was named as the father of the child.

(c) *Adopted child*. Except as provided in paragraph (c)(1) of this section evidence of relationship will include a copy of the decree of adoption or a copy of the adoptive placement agreement and such other evidence as may be necessary.

(1) In jurisdictions where petition must be made to the court for release of adoption documents or information, or where release of such documents or information is prohibited, the following may be accepted to establish the fact of adoption:

(i) As to a child adopted into the veteran's family, a copy of the child's revised birth certificate.

(ii) As to a child adopted out of the veteran's family, a statement over the signature of the judge or the clerk of the court setting forth the child's former name and the date of adoption, or a certified statement by the veteran, the veteran's surviving spouse, apportionee, or their fiduciaries setting forth the child's former name, date of birth, and the date and fact of adoption together with evidence indicating that the child's original public record of birth has been removed from such records. Where application is made for an apportionment under §3.458(d) on behalf of a child adopted out of the veteran's family, the evidence must be sufficient to establish the veteran as the natural parent of the child.

(2) As to a child adopted by the veteran's surviving spouse after the veteran's death, the statement of the adoptive parent or custodian of the child will be accepted in absence of information to the contrary, to show that the child was a member of the veteran's household at the date of the veteran's death and that recurring contributions were not being received for the child's maintenance sufficient to provide for the major portion of the child's support, from any person other than the veteran or surviving spouse or from any public or private welfare organization which furnished services or assistance to children. (Pub. L. 86-195)

(d) *Stepchild*. Evidence of relationship of a stepchild will consist of proof of birth as outlined in §3.209, evidence of the marriage of the veteran to the natural parent of the child, and evidence that the child is a member of the veteran's household or was a member of the veteran's household at the date of the veteran's death.

CROSS REFERENCE: Evidence of dependents and age. See §3.204.

[26 FR 1573, Feb. 24, 1961, as amended at 27 FR 1899, Feb. 28, 1962; 28 FR 2959, Mar. 26, 1963; 38 FR 871, Jan. 5, 1973; 47 FR 28096, June 29, 1982; 52 FR 19349, May 22, 1987; 59 FR 46338, Sept. 8, 1994]

§3.211 Death.

Death should be established by one of the following types of evidence:

(a)(1) A copy of the public record of the State or community where death occurred.